

HONORING THE MEMORY OF RICHARDSON PREYER, FORMER MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

SPEECH OF

HON. EVA M. CLAYTON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 25, 2001

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words about a North Carolina native son, the Honorable Lunsford Richardson Preyer. He died this month but left a legacy of dedicated, visionary and exemplary service to his family, community, state and nation.

He was born in Greensboro, NC in 1919 and lived and served during a difficult time in the history of our state and nation. Racial discrimination was widespread during his early life. African Americans were objects of legal, social and economic oppression. However, Richardson Preyer rose above the prevailing conditions and displayed remarkable moral integrity, tolerance and support for racial diversity and human rights.

After graduating from Princeton University and Harvard Law School, he returned home. Although an heir to a family fortune, he chose to engage in efforts to resolve conflicts between contending groups in society. He was well-suited to be a judge; he served as a state court trial judge and in 1961 was appointed to a lifetime position on the federal District Court. A few years later, he left this comfort zone seeking other opportunities to serve. In 1964, he ran unsuccessfully for Governor of North Carolina. He served several years as a bank executive and, in 1968, was elected and served the 6th District of North Carolina for six terms in the United States Congress.

Mr. Preyer was a gentleman and a scholar and a bold and courageous leader. He was given much and he gave much. It is fitting that we pay tribute to his life and legacy. He was a good man.

JESSIE ROBERSON—A GOOD CHOICE FOR A CRUCIAL JOB

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, one of the most difficult and most important jobs in the Federal Government is overseeing the cleanup of the vast complex of Department of Energy sites where plutonium and other nuclear weapons components were produced or processed.

Coloradans have a big stake in this because our State is home to a number of these sites, notably the Rocky flats site in the district I represent.

So, I rise to applaud the reported decision of President Bush to nominate Ms. Jessie Roberson, to the important position of Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management. I think it is an excellent choice.

I had the opportunity to work with Jessie when she headed the Rocky flats project in Colorado. I took an immediate liking to her—not just because of her professionalism and no-nonsense style, but also because she seemed to me to enjoy working hard, while maintaining a sense of good humor.

Her tenure at Rocky flats was highly successful. She led agency efforts to keep the commitment, first made by Energy Secretary Federico Pena, to give a high priority to finishing full cleanup and closure of rocky flats on a much earlier timetable than had previously been proposed.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the Colorado delegation in wishing her the very best as she undertakes important new responsibilities at the Department of Energy.

A recent editorial by the Denver Post put it right by calling Jessie Roberson a “top flight” pick. For the information of our colleagues, I submit that editorial for the RECORD:

[From the Denver Post, April 3, 2001]

ROBERSON A TOP-FLIGHT PICK

U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham is getting some top-flight help in cleaning up the nation's Cold War legacy: Jessie Roberson, who headed the Department of Energy's Rocky Flats closure project in Colorado, is being nominated to manage DOE's entire environmental cleanup program nationwide.

Roberson will be the second Rocky Flats veteran to move into a key DOE post. Earlier, the White House announced it will nominate Robert Card for undersecretary of energy. Card previously headed Kaiser-Hill, the contractor doing the cleanup at Rocky Flats, the mothballed nuclear bomb trigger factory north of Golden.

The Rocky Flats crew led by Roberson and Card accomplished, in just three years of teamwork, more progress toward cleanup and closure than the facility had logged in the previous decade.

It's understandable that Abraham would look toward the people who brought DOE past success to move the entire department toward its future goals.

Roberson is an excellent choice. She is a nuclear engineer who in 1996 was named the national Black Engineer of the Year for Professional Achievement in Government. That same year, she took the reins at Rocky Flats, where her personable but no-nonsense style got the flagging project on track.

In 1999, the Democratic Clinton administration tapped Roberson for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Board, which provides independent oversight at DOE nuclear sites on all issues affecting health and safety.

Now the Republican Bush Administration also has recognized the value of her 17 years of nuclear safety experience.

As assistant energy secretary for environmental management, Roberson will oversee the cleanup of all the country's Cold War atomic sites. Among them: Hanford, the toxic and radioactive nightmare in eastern Washington. Savannah River, the South Carolina reactor and processing plant that must be modernized. And Rocky Flats, the one place DOE has scored real progress toward cleanup.

With Abraham at the top and Card in the No. 2 slot, Roberson will round out DOE's civilian management team.

The department's environmental management job, in fact, is one of the toughest positions in the federal government today. There likely isn't a better person around to tackle the task, however, than Jessie Roberson.

TAX LIMITATION AMENDMENT:
H.J. RES. 41

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. J. Res. 41, the Tax Limitation Amendment 2001.

H.J. Res. 41 amends the U.S. Constitution to require that any bill, resolution or legislative measure that proposes to change Internal Revenue laws must have the approval of two-thirds of those voting in the House of Representatives and the Senate. This requirement would not apply when a declaration of war is in effect, or when the United States is engaged in a military conflict which causes an imminent and serious threat to national security as found by both Chambers and the President.

Mr. Speaker, in his famous *McCulloch vs. Maryland* opinion, Chief Justice John Marshall stated that “The power to tax is the power to destroy.” This amendment sets out to make it more difficult for the Congress to arbitrarily erase taxes, and presumably, makes the Federal Government more efficient and less bloated with unnecessary spending.

History has demonstrated that it is far easier for Congress to raise taxes to cover spending deficits than it is to reduce that spending to reasonable levels. This is all the more true today, now that the government is operating at a surplus. Neither party wants to be held responsible for any future return to peacetime deficit spending. Should such an event appear likely to occur, the temptation to raise taxes to cover any potential deficit would be overwhelming.

The enactment and ratification of this amendment would thus prevent a return to the situation which existed in this country 25 years ago. During the 1970s, middle-class families were struggling to get by under crippling high marginal tax rates, which, thanks to high inflation and bracket creep, reached deeper into the working class ranks with every passing year.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to fully support H. J. Res. 41, The Tax Limitation Constitutional Amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUSAN DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 85 and 86, I was delayed due to aircraft mechanical problems. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on both.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 59 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

WALTER ARBIB

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to recognize and salute a dear friend and a wonderful human being, Walter Arbib.

A resident and native of Israel before moving to Canada in 1988, Walter Arbib started his career as an Israeli tourist agent and took advantage of the normalized relations between Israel and Egypt for his business. As his work progressed and new horizons seemed to dawn, Walter came upon the idea of moving his work into the international relief area. Already, at this point, as co-owner of a number of SkyLink discount travel offices, Walter established his headquarters in Toronto, Canada and was the catalyst for a dream that has grown exponentially since that time. What began as a group of small travel offices has evolved into SkyLink Group which includes SkyLink Express, and air courier business; SkyLink Travel, a discount airline ticket agency; Sishost Corp., an Internet-based application hosting platform; and Dollar Rent-A-Car.

At a cursory glance, the SkyLink group of companies seems no more than an affordable, expansive travel group. However, Walter Arbib's vision has gone much further than simply affordable travel. SkyLink Aviation, Inc. is an internationally licensed operator of aircraft and helicopters which specializes in Air Sup-

port Project Management, Air Charters, Aviation Support, Aircraft Maintenance, Air Courier, Executive Aircraft, Flight Planning and Clearance Services. In short, SkyLink supplies much needed air support for humanitarian and other missions throughout the globe.

Walter's clientele has become as diverse as the United Nations (incidentally one of SkyLink's first contracts). Foreign governments, as well as the United States, have hired Walter Arbib and SkyLink to deliver food to refugees, evacuate workers, and fly into dangerous areas to provide aid and transportation. SkyLink owns approximately fourteen planes and four helicopters, but leases the bulk of its aircraft from a network of companies, sometimes as many as one hundred planes can be involved in any given operation in a matter of hours. Walter's company is always on call. If an emergency request comes through, SkyLink is prepared to act immediately.

Often, Walter doesn't even wait for a call before his aircraft are on their way to participate or spearhead disaster relief halfway across the globe. During severe flooding in Mozambique, SkyLink started to move their helicopters before Walter was even asked. His pro-active approach to work is a combination of good business sense and an understanding of the international need for an operation like SkyLink. Walter Arbib and SkyLink have received thankful letters and honors from many countries that are grateful for the service that he has provided.

SkyLink's work can sometimes deviate from the stated objective. The most illustrative ex-

ample occurred in 1994 when SkyLink was hired to bring aid to Rwanda, in the midst of war. During this operation, SkyLink's Operation Manager discovered nine hundred orphans with two aid workers struggling in abysmal working conditions. A decision was quickly made that SkyLink would donate its aircraft and manpower to the first wave of supplies, and would help set up an adequate shelter for the orphans. Back at headquarters, Walter stated matter-of-factly that he had heard this incredible story from his manager, and decided to lend a helping hand, because those children were in the middle of nowhere and the people in the field said that they were not leaving before they had a chance to help. Such devotion and goodwill is ever-pervasive in SkyLink under Arbib's leadership.

Walter Arbib has prospered because of SkyLink's extensive business ventures, but never lost sight of the main reason that this business is such a success on a number of levels. More often than not, the SkyLink symbol can be seen on the helicopters and planes evacuating refugees or bringing aid and supplies to needy citizens of other countries. While this has meant greater profits for Walter, it also fills him with a sense of pride that even in a business venture, comfort and aid can be brought to the needy throughout the world.

The international community is extremely grateful to this humanitarian whose work many times provides the difference of life or death for countless people in the path of danger.